CLAIMS

1. A picture frame assembly for mounting to a cylindrical surface, the assembly comprising:

a backing plate having a front surface, a rear surface, and plurality of parallel grooves in one of the surfaces, the backing plate being made of a material and having a thickness, the material and the thickness being chosen so that the backing plate may be plastically deformed about a bending axis parallel to the grooves;

a pair of tack elements extending from the rear surface of the backing plate, the tack elements extending from a line which is substantially parallel to the grooves; and

at least one frame element for retaining a planar picture element against the front surface of the backing plate.

2. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein the grooves are in the front surface.

3. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein the backing plate has lateral edges parallel to the grooves, the backing plate being bent along a pair of grooves adjacent to each said lateral edge to form a pair of frame elements, wherein each said lateral edge faces the front surface to retain the planar picture element between the lateral edge and the front surface.

4. The picture frame assembly of claim 3 wherein each said frame element has at least one end formed with a retaining tab to prevent the planar picture element from sliding parallel to the grooves.

5. The picture frame assembly as in claim 4 wherein the tab is triangular in shape.

6. The picture frame assembly of claim 3 wherein the tack elements are formed along a common bending axis to extend from the rear surface.

7. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein tack elements are stamped from and formed from apertures in the backing plate.

8. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein the tack elements are formed separately and attached to the rear surface of the backing plate.

9. The picture frame assembly of claim 8 wherein the backing plate and the tacks are made of metal, the tack elements being attached to the backing plate by one of soldering, brazing, and welding.

10. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein the tack elements have different lengths.

11. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein the frame element comprises a frame plate which is formed as one piece with the backing plate and joins the backing plate at a fold which is parallel to the grooves, the frame plate having a front surface, a rear surface, and a plurality of parallel grooves in one of the surfaces, the back surface of the frame plate facing the front surface of backing plate to sandwich a planar picture element therebetween, the frame plate having an aperture for viewing the picture element.

12. The picture frame assembly of claim 11 wherein the frame plate has a top edge and a bottom edge extending transversely of the grooves, the frame plate having at least one pair of retaining tabs extending from the edges, the retaining tabs being foldable against the rear surface of the backing plate to retain the picture element between the frame plate and the backing plate.

13. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein the backing plate has lateral edges parallel to the grooves, the frame element comprising a curved transparent frame plate which is received against the

front surface of the backing plate, the transparent frame plate having lateral edges which are folded to form clips which receive the lateral edges of the backing plate, the transparent frame plate being curved.

14. The picture frame assembly of claim 13 wherein said frame plate is transparent.

15. The picture frame assembly of claim 13 wherein the frame plate has an aperture.

16. The picture frame assembly of claim 1 wherein the frame element comprises:

a curved frame plate having a first radius of curvature, the frame plate having a front surface, a rear surface, and an aperture for exposing a picture element received against the rear surface; and

a surrounding wall upstanding from the rear surface of the frame plate for positioning the picture element and the backing plate, the surrounding wall having an edge remote from the rear surface of frame plate, the edge having at least one pair of retaining tabs which can be folded against the rear surface of the backing plate.

17. The picture frame assembly of claim 16 wherein the rear edge lies in a cylindrical plane having a second radius of curvature which is smaller than the first radius of curvature.

18. The picture frame assembly of claim 16 wherein the frame plate has an elliptical shape.

19. The picture frame assembly of claim 16 further comprising a cover which is hinged to the frame plate to form a locket.

20. A method of decorating a cylindrical surface, the method comprising:

providing a backing plate having a front surface, a rear surface, and plurality of parallel grooves in one

of the surfaces, the backing plate being made of a material having a thickness, the material and the thickness being chosen so that the backing plate may be plastically deformed about a bending axis parallel to the grooves, the backing plate having a pair of pointed tack elements extending from the rear surface, the tack elements being on a line which is parallel to the grooves;

providing at least one frame element for retaining a planar picture element against the front surface of the backing plate after the backing plate has been bent to a desired curved shape;

deforming the backing plate to assume a desired radius of curvature about the bending axis;

assembling the backing plate, the at least one frame element, and a planar picture element together to form a picture frame assembly; and

pressing the tack elements into a cylindrical object.

21. The method of claim 18 wherein the backing plate is deformed to have a radius of curvature which is substantially the same as the radius of curvature of the cylindrical object.

22. The method of claim 20 wherein the frame element is formed separately from the backing plate, the method further comprising cutting the backing plate to fit the frame element.